

27 August 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Warning Working Group, 24 August 1979

1. The Warning Working Group met at CIA Headquarters on 24 August 1979. Military Service representatives attended in addition to the normal participants.

2. The meeting was devoted to a discussion of draft terms of reference for the SWS. Following a lengthy discussion, the group reached a consensus:

- The SWS charter contained in DCID 1/5 remains valid.
- The WWG expects the SWS to be responsive to the NIO/W in consonance with DCID 1/5.
- SWS operating procedures will be reviewed periodically by the WWG.
- No further guidance is required at this time.

3. The Chairman announced that negotiations to revise the  Indicator List had been temporarily suspended and requested comments on NIE 4-1-78 from those agencies which had not yet submitted them.

Acting National Intelligence Officer  
for Warning

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D R A F T: 6 Aug 79

Terms of Reference for Director/SWS

1. Director/SWS serves as principal assistant to NIO/W (and ANIO/W) on strategic warning matters. Strategic warning is defined in DCID 1/5, for SWS purposes this means concentration on those situations which contain the potential for use of military force by the USSR, China, or North Korea.
2. The Staff should have three main functions:
  - a. To serve as the conscience of the Community with regard to strategic warning.
  - b. To provide synthesis of military and political intelligence related to strategic warning.
  - c. To conduct research on strategic warning matters and provide leadership for the Community intelligence production effort in this field.
3. The task as "conscience" can be defined as follows. With regard to strategic warning, SWS should:

Alert NIO/W to:

- Important developments or larger implications of developments that are being overlooked or not fully brought out in current publications.

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- Analytic presentation in these publications that does not call attention to reasonable, but less likely, alternate short-term outcomes of a threatening nature.
- Situations that justify consideration of an alert memorandum.

Develop for NIO/W alternate hypotheses on the course of major developments. This does not mean devil's advocacy, or taking the contrary line for its own sake. It does mean speculation, and carrying analysis further than evidence can fully sustain it. It also means bringing out the less probably but more worrisome potentials in an emerging situation. And it means aggressive skepticism in the face of too comfortable an acceptance of conventional wisdom.

The objective is to give NIO/W an independent capability to force line analytic consideration of unconventional interpretations. A useful model is the SWS performance on Indochina in the last six months of 1978.

4. The second task, "synthesis," is closely related to, and underpins, the first. There are two kinds of political strategic warning intelligence, recognition of developing situations that might lead to strategic confrontation, and analysis of indications within such a situation that help to measure an opponent's intentions and readiness. SWS should build links with State/INR and CIA political analysis organizations whereby a systematic flow of such intelligence comes to the

Staff, the second type perhaps on a stand-by basis only. (The Staff should also be linked, of course, with the economic and military elements of these agencies.)

5. As part of the process, SWS should stimulate and monitor a continuous dialogue among the Washington agencies and the major U&S Commands. The Weekly Alert List exercise should be reassessed; are there better ways to maintain such a dialogue? SWS should be sensitive to the needs of the field for information on what Washington is worrying about; the J-2's usually have the individual items of raw intelligence.

6. Between the exchanges with the field, its inputs of political analysis from State and CIA, the structural military-oriented products of NMIC, and its own scanning of selected raw and finished intelligence from all agencies, SWS should be in a position to recognize early the potential for confrontation, to activate at an appropriate time indications mechanisms in the non-DoD agencies, and to integrate the product of these mechanisms with that of NMIC. Thus in a crisis situation SWS should issue a periodic national warning product. SWS planning should also take into account the possibility that WISP may be adopted as a national system. In general, SWS should look for ways to make political products more compatible with indications analysis. (The emphasis here on political does not mean that SWS should think of itself as a political analysis organization. Rather, its internal strength should be somewhat more on the military side.)

7. The research activities of SWS should largely be in the military field. Here it should look on itself as the only military research

organization dedicated to the warning problem. While it cannot with a limited staff do all the research that is required, it can take the lead in the Community effort. It should therefore be staffed not only to do research but to coordinate the national program, and to draft NIE's and other major products. Initially, it should make a contribution to this effort to revalidate NIE 4-1-78 (strategy against NIT II.1), and if possible eventually take over the drafting of the final product. In this connection, SWS should reassess the need for its present Monthly.

8. SWS will also be called upon to carry out various tasks supporting the above missions. Among these are:

- Maintenance of the General Indicator List.
- Detailed evaluation, for the Warning Working Group, of proposed warning methodologies and of the warning contribution of individual collection systems.

9. Of these tasks, the first is obviously the highest priority, the third the lowest. In normal times, however, most of the SWS effort in man-hours should be applied to research. As a crisis arises, the balance should be changed, and arrangements should be in existence that will permit augmentation and in full crisis 24-hour manning. This will permit an efficient use of manpower, one that will prevent the work of the Staff from becoming rote. Each officer should always have a challenging task in front of him, either current or research.

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10. For managerial matters, SWS's chain-of-command is from the DDCI and his Committee to the NIO/W and the Warning Working Group to SWS. For substantive ones, the chain runs from the DCI (NFIB for estimates) to NIO/W to SWS in accordance with DCID 1/5. It is clear that SWS should have some relationship with the NIO's, in particular NIO/CF, NIO/SP, and NIO/USSR-EE, but these are yet to be defined. It may be desirable for them to constitute an informal steering group, with NIO/W, to review SWS substantive work.

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